

# [***'Distressing': Experts Warn That Exodus Of Senior House GOP Members Spells Trouble For Republicans***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BF5-H231-JBFB-H1SJ-00000-00&context=1516831)

The Daily Caller

February 27, 2024 Tuesday 11:15 PM EST

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**Section:** DAILY-CALLER-NEWS-FOUNDATION; ***politics***; ***politics***

**Length:** 901 words

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**Body**

[*Link to Image*](https://cdn01.dailycaller.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/GettyImages-2010581423-1-scaled-e1709068656368.jpg)

High-profile retirements of House Republicans suggest policy and electoral trouble for the party next year during the 119th Congress, experts told the Daily Caller News Foundation.

The conference has faced several public controversies revealing deep internal divisions, beginning with the process to elect Kevin McCarthy as the speaker of the House of Representatives in January 2023, which took 15 rounds of voting amid defections from Republican lawmakers. Amid McCarthy's removal from office, a chaotic process to elect his successor and several failed votes, multiple senior members of Congress have chosen to retire from the body, which experts believe will deprive the conference of policy experience and suggests electoral trouble for the majority. [***(RELATED: House Leaves Washington Without Passing Spending Bills Ahead Of Government Shutdown Deadline)***](https://dailycaller.com/2024/02/15/house-leaves-washington-spending-bills-government-shutdown-deadline/)

“Particularly troubling is that the GOP is losing seasoned chairpersons, these are people who lead committees and therefore have great sway over policy-making and oversight of the executive branch,” Kevin Kosar, a co-founder of the Legislative Branch Working Group and former acting research manager of the Congressional Research Service, told the DCNF. “It should be particularly distressing to the Republican Party that so many very good legislators are calling it quits.”

A statement from Congressman Gallagher. [*pic.twitter.com/93xhZIyVRb*](https://t.co/93xhZIyVRb)

- Rep. Gallagher Press Office (@RepGallagher) [*February 10, 2024*](https://twitter.com/RepGallagher/status/1756389895096918262?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Committee chairs can shape federal policy in their areas of jurisdiction and conduct oversight of the executive branch. Importantly, they also conduct investigations and can schedule live hearings to scrutinize both government and private witnesses, which can have major effects, such as the [*testimony*](https://www.harvard.edu/president/speeches-gay/2023/hearing-before-the-house-committee-on-education-and-the-workforce-2/) of two elite university presidents on anti-Semitism on Dec. 5, 2023, that led to their resignation after widespread criticism.

Among those committee chairs retiring are House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Kay Granger, House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairwoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, House Financial Services Committee Chairman Patrick McHenry, House Select Committee on Strategic Competition with the Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mike Gallagher and House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Mark Green, though Green is reportedly [*reconsidering*](https://twitter.com/thehill/status/1762214996228936090) his retirement. In total, 21 Republicans have [*announced*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/casualty-list) that they will not seek reelection to the House in November, either for retirement from ***politics*** or to run for a different office.

“It's not a great sign for a party when that many committee chairs and other folks in leadership positions are retiring. It suggests that many of them think there's a pretty good chance that their party loses control of the chamber,” Josh Chafetz, the Agnes Williams sesquicentennial professor of law and ***politics*** at Georgetown University and a [*member*](https://www.law.georgetown.edu/congressional-studies/) of its congressional studies working group, told the DCNF. “[I]t's never great to lose people with years of expertise.”

Chafetz, however, indicated that the loss of committee chairs is mitigated by the “centralization in the House” whereby the majority party's senior leadership makes most of the key policy decisions. This was echoed by Joshua Huder, a senior fellow at The Government Affairs Institute and former congressional fellow for the American Political Science Association.

“The fact is committees are not the epicenters of governing or political power that they once were,” Huder told the DCNF. However, he noted that “[f]rom an experience vantage point, it could have an effect. Experiencing government shutdowns first hand, for example, often gives legislators a different viewpoint on its value as a legislative tactic.”

“If anything, it's a reflection of the changes going on in the Republican Party. Veteran Republicans who represent a more traditional style of conservatism under former Presidents Bush and Reagan are stepping aside as former President Trump continues to reshape the party,” Huder said.

The experts indicated that such political shifts are evocative of trouble for House Republicans in November, with their approval rating currently being [*net negative*](https://navigatorresearch.org/congressional-republicans-mark-their-lowest-approval-rating-since-taking-control-of-the-house/) among Republican voters, according to Navigator Research, the first time such a rating has ever been recorded for an incumbent party.

“These Republicans may be the canaries in the coal mine. They may be telling us that the House GOP presently is not capable of governing and that it is going to lose its majority come November,” Kosar said.

Longtime Republican political strategist William F. Buckley O'Reilly agreed.

“Serving in Congress is one of the worst jobs in America right now. You get to bang your head against the wall for two years and get yelled at by constituents demonstrating outside your house. It's no wonder members are fleeing in droves. People run for Congress to actually get things done, and when the reality of a stalemated Washington hits home, they want out of there. Who can blame them?” O'Reilly told the DCNF.

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**Graphic**

WASHINGTON, DC - FEBRUARY 14: Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (R-LA) (C) is joined by fellow GOP House leaders for a news conference at the U.S. Capitol Visitors Center on February 14, 2024 in Washington, DC. After last week's attempt to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas failed, Johnson led his caucus through a second vote this week, ultimately impeaching the first cabinet secretary in almost 150 years by a vote of 214 to 213 Tuesday night. The impeachment triggers a trial in the U.S. Senate which is expected to easily acquit Mayorkas of the charges of high crimes and misdemeanors. (Photo by Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images)

**Load-Date:** February 27, 2024

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